

**MINUTES OF THE HARMON FIELD BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WORK SESSION
THURSDAY, JUNE 19, 2025**

Chairman Warren Watson called the Harmon Field Board of Supervisors work session to order at 6:30 PM at Tryon Town Hall, McCown Room.

Board Members Present: Chairman Warren Watson; Vice-Chairman Lynn Cromer; and Steve Sloan

Board Members Absent: Secretary-Treasurer Rick Covil; and Greg Miner

Staff Present: Brad Gordon, Park Superintendent; and Meg Rogers, Town Secretary/Cashier

Park Superintendent Brad Gordon requested addition of an agenda item at the beginning of the work session to provide a report on the current status of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) process and the Harmon Field recovery. Addition of the item was approved.

Status Report on Harmon Field from Park Superintendent Brad Gordon

Gordon distributed two handouts. The first handout listed the FEMA Process Staging for the remediation funding requests presented so far for Harmon Field. A few elements were noted as having signed PO# for contractors (Open-air gym, Culvert at front gate, Harmon Field Bridge, and Baseball Field A/Dallara Field). FEMA Process Stage for the listed elements varied from Pending Project Development, Pending DDD Approval, Pending Insurance Completion, Pending DIU Validation, or Pending PEER Review. "Harmon Field Projects Obligated" column included two elements-Debris Removal and Mold Remediation. This handout also listed large projects started at Harmon Field (Baseball Field A and Fencing, Culvert at entrance, Open-Air Gym Floor and Fencing and Harmon Field Bridge) and FEMA Work Completed (Maintenance Shop 1 Cleanup, Maintenance Shop 2 Cleanup, Small Restrooms, All Mowers Except 1 Jacobsen, All Tractors Except JD 750, Barns 1 & 2, Debris Removal, Picnic Tables, Small Engine Equipment, and Identifying Damages). Currently, both the Cabin and Fieldhouse buildings were designated as within the 50% rule by the County for demolition if repair estimates exceeded 50% of pre-flood appraised value. Gordon quoted appraisal and repair estimates received so far that indicated that demolition of both buildings was probable. Gordon explained that there was currently no PO issued for work to begin on the playground pending Town Manger and Board approval and confirmation of exactly where the playground would be positioned, i.e. the original location vs a different location at the park.

Gordon informed the Board that a condition of receiving FEMA funds for repair, replacement or mitigation for any building was that the resulting building must be insured against flood damage going forward. Staff was getting information on cost of flood insurance and insurability for the buildings included in the FEMA funding requests.

Chairman Watson asked for clarification on the use of mitigation funds from facilities that had to be demolished for alternate facilities (such as the community center) at Harmon Field.

The second handout listed Harmon Field Projects 2025. These were projects defined by Harmon Field staff to be addressed as personnel, equipment, materials and funds were available. Gordon stated that a few had already been completed and some were under consideration. Gordon had taken the equestrian items from the list to Blue Ridge Hunter Jumper Association (BRHJA) and Tryon Riding & Hunt Club (TRHC) to consider for donations/sponsorship/grants. Gordon suggested that a portable sound system purchased by Harmon Field could be used for equestrian or other events and stored when not in use. Replacement of the safety pipe on the tops of the baseball field fencing with yellow safety pipe was recommended for Ballfields A and B. Gordon proposed to get a carpet cleaning contractor to try to refresh the appearance of the putting green and adding a new hole where the fabric was already torn.

Gordon quoted some costing information not shown on the two handouts. The Board asked Gordon to forward to them the costing information he quoted so the members could print that information for review and reference.

Review and Discussion of Proposed Master Plan Update & Flood Maps

Copies of the proposed Harmon Field Update and updated Flood Maps for Harmon Field were reviewed and discussed. Chairman Watson stated he had no problem with the small additions like the proposed volleyball courts, but wanted the priority facilities like the playground, implemented and scheduled before starting on those smaller elements. Gordon stressed that the Master Plan was important for preparing for the future use of Harmon Field, not just the FEMA restorations. The need for the practice soccer field was questioned and Gordon explained that a minimally maintained practice field would reduce wear and tear on the highly maintained tournament soccer fields making maintenance of those fields less costly. Chairman Watson approved of the recommendation to open up the riverbank areas for peaceful enjoyment by park patrons. Both the Board and staff did not want to fill up space with new facilities that would be costly to maintain. Both staff and the Board liked the expanded parking lots in the Master Plan that would reduce the amount of mowing needed and provide ample parking for patrons. If the large bathroom building/fieldhouse was demolished, staff and the Board recommended replacement with smaller unisex ADA compliant facilities (similar to the bathrooms at Rogers Park), conveniently spaced across the park, that would be cheaper and easier for staff to maintain. Gordon reported that the oval track was the most used facility at Harmon Field and he was getting quotes for repaving and researching possible sponsors to fund the repaving. The Board members wanted to find areas to cut back on maintenance expense. The centralized lighting control with remote management by wireless phone was part of the Master Plan that would reduce support staff time and expense.

Gordon recommended centralizing the location for all Harmon Field maintenance equipment at the maintenance building with secure security fencing account the facility

and addition of a three-sided shed at the back of the building to shelter the equipment within the secured area. The bridge would have to be fully restored to make this feasible.

Revision of gym room project to make it a bathroom instead of event kitchen/classroom was suggested, but status of the project grant funding and restrictions had to be determined before that change could be considered. Adding a second playground for children 5 years old and younger, possibly near the community center building, was suggested, if the main playground was restored at its original location on the river.

Gordon reported reduction in use of the tennis courts and increase in demand for pickleball courts. Gordon suggested trying a new configuration that would temporarily remove the Flexcourt® panels from another adjacent tennis court, so there would be four pickleball courts and two tennis courts. The Flexcourt® tiles could be stored and reinstalled if demand for the third tennis court became an issue. The Board suggested that this project be put on the agenda for approval at the next meeting.

Relative demand for cornhole vs. horseshoe pits facilities was discussed. Gordon reported minimal use of horseshoe pits. The Board asked about the electrical hookups across the river in "hog heaven" area. Gordon reported that all power had been cut off and electrical billing accounts closed for those outlets. Staff would use park equipment to pull the fixtures up and cap off the conduits to eliminate those hookups.

Sources of future income to fund the Master Plan projects were discussed and suggestions included staff-operated concession stand, future rental options for renovated community center building rooms, and adding more open-sided picnic sheds on concrete slabs along the river to rent for family events. Holding a fall concert series similar to the Rogers Park Summer Tracks concerts, hosting bands at the covered area at the concession stand was suggested by a citizen attendee. Bingo in the park fundraiser was discussed briefly, but Foothills Equestrian Nature Center (FENCE) had recently started doing this. Other fundraising options suggested included soliciting vendors to operate revenue-generating activities at Harmon Field like putt-putt or movie nights with an inflatable screen,. Feasibility of alcoholic beverage sales at Harmon Field during concerts or events was discussed very briefly. Gordon reported that Tryon Riding & Hunt Club (TRHC) had suggested holding a "Community Day" event at Harmon Field with a mini-barbecue festival, pony rides, etc. Gordon had consulted Tryon Downtown Development Director Lourdes Gutierrez who suggested coordinating follow-up events connected to TDDA downtown events such as a Harmon Field event with trunk-or-or treat, haunted trail and tractor hay-ride around the park on Saturday after TDDA's Halloween Stroll. Coordination of public events would require a volunteer director or a volunteer-staffed events subcommittee to plan and oversee the events since Harmon Field did not have enough paid staff to do this.

Chairman Watson summarized that the plan was moving in the right direction. Slow and careful work was needed to develop an effective plan. The children's playground had a high priority and that facility restoration needed approval and PO issued. The gym room project needed to be revisited to see if changes were needed for future

feasibility. Board and staff agreed that they did not want to fill Harmon Field with buildings and facilities. However, they needed to balance needs of older users with needs of young families.

Discuss Changes to HFBS Meeting Calendar for FY 2025-2026

Chairman Watson proposed moving all Harmon Field Board of Supervisors meetings to 6:30 pm and adding a second meeting each month on the third Thursday after the first Tuesday meeting also at 6:30 pm for fiscal year 2025-2026 to provide more opportunities for the Board to better understand and participate in Harmon Field's planning and recovery efforts. Cromer and Sloan asked that the time be changed to 6:00 pm instead of 6:30 pm to better fit their availability. Chairman Watson asked that the proposed schedule be drawn up for review and approval at the July 1, 2025 meeting which would be held at the new 6:00 pm meeting time.

Next Meeting Date

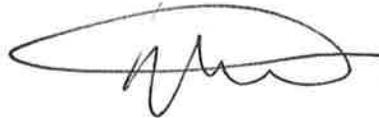
The next regular meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, July 1, 2025, 6:00 pm at Tryon Town Hall, McCown Council Meeting Room.

Adjourn

Chairman Watson adjourned the meeting at 8:00 pm

Submitted By:

Approved:



**Meg Rogers substituting for
Rick Covil, Secretary-Treasurer**

**Warren Watson
Chairman**